THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840].

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed" (ISAIAH 33: 20).

No. 4, Vol. LXXX. Thursday, January 24, 1918. Price One Penny.

WHO WAS JOSEPH SMITH?

BY PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH.

"To me, there is a sweet fascination in contemplation of his childhood and youth. I love to contemplate the innocence and artless simplicity of his boyhood. It bears record that he was honest, that he was led by the Spirit of God to perform his wonderful mission. How could a child at his age be impelled by other than honest motives in the accomplishment of his high and holy calling? What he did he was led to do by the inspiration and guidance of his heavenly Father. Of this I feel assured.

"He was much like other children; his play was like that of his companions; his thoughts, like those of most children, were innocent, and consequently he was incapable of the knavery and connivance that his enemies declared he practiced. Though poor, his parents were honest and good; they delighted in the truth, and it was their honest desire to live according to the best light within them. Love and goodwill to all found expression in their hearts and actions, and their children were imbued with like sentiments. They were firm believers in God, and trusted in His watchcare over His children. They had frequently received manifestations of His loving kindness, in dreams, visions, and inspirations, and God had healed their little ones, in answer to prayer, when they were nigh unto death. It was in such an atmosphere that the boy was reared. Joseph was a remarkably quiet and well-disposed child, who gave his parents little or no trouble. As early as the age of eight, he gave proof that besides being thoughtful, easily governed, and of sweet and loving disposition, he possessed the foundation principles of a good character —filial affection, patience, endurance, courage.

"Concerning his spiritual manifestations, is it reasonable to suppose that there could have been premeditated deceit on the part of the boy, and such a boy, in his simple statement of what he saw and heard? No; neither could the answer which the heavenly messenger gave to him, have been composed in the child's own mind. Joseph Smith's testimony concerning his heavenly manifestations, in later life, was as simple, straightforward, plain, and true, as it had been in childhood; the fidelity, courage, and love, implanted in and characteristic of his life in boyhood, neither faltered nor changed with maturity. His wisdom came in revelations of God to him.

"One marked illustration of his character, was his love for children. He never saw a child but he desired to take it up and bless it, and many he did so bless, taking them in his arms and upon his knee. I myself have sat upon his knee. He was so fond of children that he would go far out of his way to speak to a little one, which is to me a striking characteristic of true manhood. He had a like true love for the human race. I know, and have known from my childhood, that he was a Prophet of God, and I believe in his divine mission with all my heart; and in the authenticity and inspiration of the revelations which he received, and the Book of Mormon which he was instrumental in bringing forth."

By Orson F. Whitney, of the Council of the Twelve.

"Whatever may be said or thought by others, I affirm that the mind that could grasp such splendid and exalted principles, as Joseph the Prophet grasped and revealed, and uttered them in a manner so powerful, was essentially a literary mind, the mind of a prophet and a poet, than whom none mightier, save the very Son of God, ever struck the harp of truth and made it vibrant to the music of the spheres.

"'What poem did Joseph Smith produce?' He produced the great poem called 'Mormonism,' the grandest and sublimest epic ever conceived and brought forth by the mind of man. The highest concepts of former poets and prophets are but parts of his concept, mere chapters of his book, even as the dispensations in which they figured were but tributary to this greatest of dispensations, over which he presides. They are the rivers to his ocean, the forerunners to his fulfilment. And yet, he was not the great fulfilment. He stands upon the shoulders of former prophets and sees farther than any of the earlier seers. But above and beyond all is Christ, the Creator, the divine Author of this divinest of poems which, sounded as a prophecy in pre-existent spheres, finds its fullest human expression, in the heaven-inspired song sung by the Prophet of the Last Dispensation."

By Josiah Quincy (Class of 1821, Harvard College).

Mr. Quincy visited Nauvoo, in May, 1844. His impressions of the Prophet Joseph Smith are published in the book, *Figures of the Past*, Robert Bros., Boston, 1844. He says:

"It is by no means improbable that some future text book, for the use of generations yet unborn, will contain a question something like this: What historical American of the nineteenth century has exerted the most powerful influence upon the destinies of his countrymen? And it is by no means impossible that the answer to that interrogatory may be thus written: *Joseph Smith, the Mormon Prophet.* And the reply, absurd as it doubtless seems to most men now living, may be an obvious commonplace to their descendants. History deals in surprises and paradoxes quite as startling as this. The man who established a religion in this age of free debate, who was and is to-day accepted by hundreds of thousands as a direct emissary from the Most High—such a rare human being is not to be disposed of by pelting his memory with unsavory epithets. Fanatic, impostor, charlatan, he may have been; but these hard names furnish no solution to the problem he presents to us. Fanatics and impostors are living and dying every day, and their memory is buried with them; but the wonderful influence which this founder of a religion exerted and still exerts throws him into relief before us, not as a rogue to be criminated, but as a phenomenon to be explained. The most vital questions Americans are asking each other to-day have to do with this man and what he has left us.

"*A fine looking man* is what the passer-by would instinctively have murmured upon meeting the remarkable individual who has fashioned the mould which was to shape the feelings of so many thousands of his fellow mortals. But Smith was more than this, and one could not resist the impression that capacity and resource were natural to his stalwart person. I have already mentioned the resemblance he bore to Elisha R. Potter, of Rhode Island, whom I met in Washington in 1826. The likeness was not such as would be recognized in a picture, but rather one that would be felt in a grave emergency. Of all men I have met, these two seemed best endowed with that kingly faculty which directs, as by intrinsic right, the feeble or confused souls who are looking for guidance.

"Joseph Smith recognized the curse and iniquity of slavery, though he opposed the methods of the Abolitionists. His plan was for the nation to pay for the slaves from the sale of public lands. 'Congress,' he said, 'should be compelled to take this course, by petitions from all parts of the country; but the petitioners must disclaim all alliance with those who would disturb the rights of property secured by the Constitution and foment insurrection.' It may be worth while to remark that Smith's plan

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was publicly advocated, eleven years later, by one who has mixed so much practical shrewdness with his lofty philosophy. In 1855, when men's minds had been moved to their depths on the question of slavery, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson declared that it should be met in accordance 'with the interests of the South and with the settled conscience of the North. It is really not a great task, a great fight for this country to accomplish, to buy that property of the planter, as the British nation bought the West Indian slaves.' He further says that the 'United States will be brought to give every inch of their public lands for a purpose like this.' We, who can look back upon the terrible cost of the fratricidal war which put an end to slavery, now say that such a solution of the difficulty would have been worthy a Christian statesman. But if the retired scholar was in advance of his time when he advocated this disposition of the public property in 1855, what shall I say of the political and religious leader who had committed himself in print, as well as in conversation, to the same course in 1844? If the atmosphere of men's opinions was stirred by such a proposition when the war-clouds were discernible in the sky, was it not a statesmanlike word, eleven years earlier, when the heavens looked tranquil and beneficent?

"Born in the lowest ranks of poverty, without book-learning, * * * Joseph Smith had made himself at the age of thirty-nine a power on earth. Of the multitudinous family of Smith from Adam down (Adam of the 'Wealth of Nations,' I mean), none had so won human hearts and shaped human lives as this Joseph. His influence, whether for good or for evil, is potent to-day, and the end is not yet.

"I have endeavored to give you the details of my visit to the Mormon Prophet, with absolute accuracy. If the reader does not know just what to make of Joseph Smith, I cannot help him out of his difficulty. I myself stand helpless before the puzzle."

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By James E. Talmage, of the Council of the Twelve.

"The names that live longest as titles of distinction are of men whose message to the world is in a manner new, whose mission is specific and distinctive, and whose commission bears the seal of authority. The man of whom we speak, Joseph Smith, restorer of the gospel of Christ, in the latter days; the man through whom was opened the latest dispensation in the work of the Lord—a dispensation called new, though characterized by the restoration of the authority and powers of all preceding epochs—this man is one whom men cannot forget or ignore, try as they may. His place in history is secure; his work is recognized as that of a mission delegated to him alone. There is but this answer to the greatest question of the age: *Joseph Smith was truly the Prophet of the Most High God.*"

AT CONFERENCE IN ZION.

How anxiously I used to look forward to the conferences of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the mission field, but how much more eagerly do I look forward to the conferences of the Church at its headquarters at Salt Lake City, Utah!

On October 3rd, 1917, a number of saints, including myself, left Paris, Idaho, for Salt Lake City. On arriving there, I was very much impressed by the sight of the vast number of soldiers in evidence everywhere, though we are so far away from the places where such sights are seen at all times. Now they are here, too, all engaged in the same struggle for liberty and justice.

On the 8th of October, eight thousand soldiers marched through the city, and one-half of these, it was estimated, were "Mormon" boys, who have been trained in the doctrines of the Church. Many were returned missionaries. It seemed so strange to see them in uniform, they who had preached to us in the mission field the gospel of peace, but oftentimes lovers of peace must fight to gain the desired boon. Wrong and selfishness now hold sway, and have to be overthrown by a mighty conflict. This is their aim when taking up the sword of justice. Many of the onlookers of that parade had smiles on their faces, but many more, especially the mothers, had tears in their eyes. Thousands of prayers went up that night that those boys would return in safety, pure and unspotted from the world. Secretary Lane was heard to remark that he wished President Wilson could have seen the parade of such a number of splendid types of manhood out here in the West.

A very enjoyable time was spent at the London conference reunion. How happy it makes one to shake the hands of the elders and saints from one's own conference—people who have deeply sympathized with you at different times. A short program was rendered, supper served, games indulged in. The reunion was a splendid success, and arrangements were made to make it even better in the future than it has been in the past. A very happy time was enjoyed by all.

Every meeting of the conference was inspiring, impressive and beautiful, but the meeting on the Sunday afternoon impressed me most. At 1 p.m. my friends and I took our seats under the gallery, and at that early hour the body of the Tabernacle was well filled, but at the many entrances the people simply flowed in, until every nook and corner of that vast building was occupied. The Assembly Hall was also packed to its capacity, and open-air meetings were held in different parts of the Temple Block. Twelve thousand people, it was estimated, were there that day.

My thoughts went back to many of the beautiful churches in England, where oftentimes the congregation is little more than the choir itself. It is true, great crowds of people have attended

revival meetings there, and excitement and curiosity have prevailed, just the same as they did at the time of the boyhood of our Prophet Joseph Smith, but how lasting in many cases have the results of these revivals been? Of "Mormonism" it is said that once you get the spirit of it, you cannot get away from it. If it were ever taken out of my life there would be nothing to live for. Vast numbers from all over the United States and Canada assemble twice a year in conference, to be instructed and given spiritual food, by their leaders, whom they love and honor.

The words of Micah repeatedly came to my mind:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

The choir began to take their seats, and soft strains of music could be heard, until vast volumes of harmony were issuing forth from the immense organ. Meanwhile, President Joseph F. Smith and the other Church authorities had taken their places, and for a few moments there was deep silence throughout the vast building. How peaceful everything was, and what a contrast to the conditions prevailing in the world! Splendid addresses were delivered by our leading men, replete with advice and encouragement.

Before the meeting closed, President Joseph F. Smith spoke of the purchase of Liberty bonds by the Church. President Anthon H. Lund moved that the Church, through the Trustee-in-trust, buy Liberty bonds, and that not to exceed $250,000 of the tithing funds be appropriated for that purpose. President Charles W. Penrose seconded the motion. When the vote was called for by President Smith, twelve thousand hands were raised in favor of the proposition, and not one in opposition to it.

This, I understand, is the first time in the history of the Church that any portion of the tithing fund has been used for any other than Church purposes, generally so called. It made me happy to think that I belonged to a Church that could make such a handsome appropriation in the time of need. Many churches are in debt all the time.

The Monday morning following, a Mutual Improvement Association convention was held. As a member of one of the stake boards, it was my privilege to attend. We had a splendid meeting. At the close of it we inspected a magnificent display of Red Cross work made by the auxiliary associations of the Church. Clothing and comforts of every description were beautifully made in great abundance. Hundreds of quarts of fruit and jelly for the soldiers were also on exhibition.

The next day, I met Brother Henry M. O'Gorman, who kindly took me through the new Church offices. It is a magnificent building, constructed of Utah material, principally. A fireproof library is located at the top of the building, where Church records and publications are kept. No poor words of mine can describe this building, but I must suggest to saints who come to Zion not to fail to see what the Church possesses in this line.

I had intended leaving Salt Lake City for Ogden the following morning, but the temptation to remain long enough to hear an organ recital was too strong. Going into the Temple grounds, I followed a crowd of tourists who were listening to some of our elders describing the buildings and explaining the doctrines of the Church. One could tell by the looks of curiosity on the faces of most of the visitors that they were not "Mormons." I wish I could have told them how true was every word spoken by the guide. At 11 a.m. we went into the Tabernacle and heard a beautiful organ recital. These recitals are given free to tourists during the summer months. Where is there another church that provides such an entertainment for the traveler?

I had to linger for a few moments before the monuments of our beloved Prophet, Joseph Smith, and his brother, Hyrum, and I tried to think of the magnitude of the work they did for the good of humanity. Tears came to my eyes, when I thought of the treatment they received. I also spent some time at the Seagull monument, and there thoughts of the bravery of the Pioneers and the goodness of God to them came to my mind. How wonderful it all seemed! And how much we, as members of the Church, have to be thankful for!

At 12:30 I left Salt Lake City for Ogden, where I spent some time with friends and relatives. On the 15th of October I returned home, full of the testimony of the divinity of the gospel, and with a great desire to labor for it during the coming winter. No other work in all the world has brought me so much joy as this. It has given me happiness and the peace that "passeth understanding."

Paris, Idaho. HILDA M. YOUNG.

IN tracing the thing to the foundation, and looking at it philosophically, we shall find a very material difference between the body and the spirit; the body is supposed to be organized matter, and the spirit, by many, is thought to be immaterial, without substance. With this latter statement we should beg leave to differ, and state that spirit is a substance; that it is material, but that it is more pure, elastic and refined matter than the body; that it existed before the body, can exist in the body, and will exist separate from the body, when the body will be mouldering in the dust; and will, in the resurrection, be again united with it.—JOSEPH SMITH.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 1918.

EDITORIAL.

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

"THERE went with us also certain of the disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge."

This is from The Acts (21:16) and records an incident of the journey of the Apostle Paul to Jerusalem, on his return from a mission to Macedonia.

Paul and his companions, after an eventful mission, had decided to return home, and, after a short rest at Cæsarea, were ready for the last stage of the journey to the city where the headquarters of the Church had been established. In several places visited by the missionary party, the Spirit of Prophecy had indicated that persecution awaited the great Apostle of the Gentiles at Jerusalem. At Cæsarea a prophet named Agabus took Paul's girdle and predicted that the owner of it should be bound hand and foot by the Jews. These prophecies caused a great deal of anxiety among the disciples, and some of them, prompted by their love for a servant of the Lord, went with him to the great city, where dangers threatened him. If he could not be persuaded to desist from entering the lions' den, they would share the peril with him.

Among those who accompanied Paul was Mnason, of Cyprus, who, evidently, possessed a house in Jerusalem, large enough to accommodate the entire company, for he, it seems, was to provide lodging for them.

Nothing more is known of this devoted follower of the Nazarene, than what is stated here. He is called an "old disciple," or rather an "early" disciple. In all probability, he had heard the gospel preached by St. Peter, when this Apostle came to Cæsarea and delivered the first gospel discourse to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. If this supposition is correct, he is very properly called an "early" disciple, and by the time of this visit of Paul to Cæsarea he would be an "old" disciple, too.

The point to note about this noble Cypriot especially, however, is this, that he was a staunch friend and supporter of Paul, and as such his name is inscribed upon the pages of Holy Writ.

Paul had a message to deliver to the world which was entirely new, namely, that the Gentiles might become citizens in the kingdom of God, through faith, without first entering into the Mosaic covenant. This was something unheard of. Many of the Jewish

converts rejected this doctrine as rank heresy, and it was opposed in many of the branches of the church, especially in Galatia, until it seemed that an open breach was imminent. Even Peter, notwithstanding the vision preceding his call to go to Cæsarea, in which he was taught to consider none of God's children unclean, did not give to Paul his undivided support at all times, because he feared "them which were of the circumcision" (Gal. 2: 12), and Paul rebuked him openly for his dissimulation, by which Barnabas also was carried away. But this Mnason was faithful and true. That is evident from his attitude at this time, when Paul went to Jerusalem, to face whatever opposition he might encounter there. Mnason had accepted the message of Paul as divine. He had not rejected it as "newfangled" ideas. He had received the testimony of the Spirit concerning this gospel, and now he openly manifested his faith by identifying himself with the companions of the great preacher of the seemingly new gospel.

And he was an "old" disciple. That fact is brought out in his honor. Generally those who are young are relied upon to embrace new ideas, and take the lead in startling reforms. University students, for instance, in the enthusiasm of youth, are generally ready to listen to truth, even when it comes in an unpopular garb, for their minds have many a blank space to be filled in.

But those who are old, very often do not care to learn any more. They look backwards and not forwards. They are so engrossed by what they have seen, or heard, or learnt, that they have neither time nor inclination for anything "new," no matter how important it may be. They are nearing the end of their day, and they seem to think that the evening of their own mortal career ought to be the *finis* of the history of the world. It was not so with this Mnason. Although he was old in years, he was able to take an interest in something new, something unheard-of, something that so many condemned and rejected. He was capable of studying the teachings Paul presented, and notwithstanding his years and experience in the Church, he was willing to learn. He was a "disciple," and not a master. All this made him a remarkable man, and useful in the service of the Lord.

Furthermore, we may say that, whatever his age was at this time, he was really young. For nobody is old as long as he takes a leading part in the progress of his age.

These observations suggest the question that forms the caption of these paragraphs. "How old are you?" In other words, Have you ceased to be a disciple? Have you ceased to learn? If so, old age is creeping upon you.

It has been said that Walter Scott, Montaigne, and Samuel Johnson were old, while comparatively young men, because they felt and acted as men under the weight of years. Samuel Johnson held that at thirty-five a man had reached the summit. This may be true of some, but it is equally true, that some men never

grow old. Titian lived to be ninety-nine years old and produced some wonderful paintings almost to the end. Gladstone began to learn a new language at the age of seventy. Laplace labored in the field of astronomy until his death at the age of seventy-eight. He died young at that age. Bismarck did his greatest work after he was seventy. Goethe finished his "Faust" a few years before he died, at the age of eighty-three.

Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and many others of the leaders of the Church lived to a good old age, and were young to the last. They were strong both intellectually and physically, and there are many such men and women in the Church to-day, who are young, though advanced in years. President Young, on one occasion, said that "Mormonism" keeps people young. And so it does, if we follow its precepts. If we keep the Word of Wisdom, our bodies will be strong and healthy, and no disease germ can injure a perfectly healthy body. If we observe the laws of God and live pure, temperate lives, we shall have peace in our hearts and a clear conscience. There is no better tonic than a tranquil mind, into which worry and dissatisfaction never enter.

Someone has well said, "As long as a man can keep himself in that attitude and look back on every year and say, 'I grew,' he is still young. The minute he ceases to grow, the day he says to himself, 'I know all that I need to know,'—that day youth stops. He may be twenty-five or seventy-five, it makes no difference. On that day he begins to be old."

J. M. S.

WHAT IS YOUR MEASURE?

AFTER eighty-six years of "Mormonism," the people generally find it impossible to accept the principle of revelation through a true, modern prophet, and from what the writer is able to see, the search for a person who verily believes the Bible to be the word of God "is like hunting for a needle in a haystack." For this reason the pathway to the water's brink is not crowded. As people do not accept the whole Bible nowadays, there is no common standard by which the different systems can be measured. Each denomination—yes, each man or woman—has an individual yard-stick which varies in length and the color of the paint, making the state of affairs even more complex.

But how can you expect anything else when the shepherds of the flock "judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean on the Lord and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us" (Micah 3: 11). People will listen to the false prophets to-day, as the Jews did to the false prophets who told Zedekiah that all was well and that the Lord was with them, while they would not believe Jeremiah, who called upon them to repent.

In several conversations with ministers and local preachers, after discussing various topics, the subject of authority has come up. Different answers are given to the question, Do you claim to have been called of God as was Aaron? About as ingenious a reply as any the writer has heard was one given by a person calling himself an evangelist. He answered thus: "No, I contend that every man has the right to teach truth and baptize his converts. No one on the earth has the right to lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost." When it came to clinching the argument by using the Scriptures, it developed that he did not accept the Old Testament, nor the New, from the beginning of Romans to the end of Revelation. Five books of the Bible constituted his measure. No wonder that he scoffed at the idea of Joseph Smith's being a prophet. His measure could not contain such a glorious work as that which Joseph Smith brought forth. Thus it is with most people. They form their own conceptions, and those parts of the Bible which are at variance with their ideas they lay on the shelf as irrelevant. They choose their own paths irrespective as to whether or not they are in accord with the plan of salvation, forgetting the while that the brightness of the crowns they shall wear some time will depend upon how nearly they shall walk in the one narrow path. The divine constitution, or code of laws, known as the Plan of Salvation, was full measure, but men have cut off a length here and another there until now the yard is only a foot, or a few inches, according to how much of the Plan of Salvation the individual or the church will accept.

Man must not set himself up as his own preceptor. He must be willing to accept for his government the whole code of laws. This is no more than just. Inasmuch as the Author of that code paid our debt and made it possible for us to receive pardon for our transgressions, He was justified in setting the conditions upon which we could receive the benefit of His life and death. The mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to proclaim the original standard given to us again, without subtraction or change of principles or ordinances. More is required by this standard because of its perfection, than by any other. So also, more is promised to those whose lives are in harmony with this standard.

When men shall be willing to accept the Bible as the Word of God and Jesus as the Christ in very deed, they may then be prepared to accept the truth that, "God will do nothing, but He revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets," and modern revelation making plain the gospel will become one of the links in the chain of truth, which, when applied as the standard, shall prove to all earnest seekers for the right the utter absurdity of the claims of the churches of men. By what standard are you measuring Joseph Smith and "Mormonism"?

Sunderland. PARLEY M. CONDIE.

HOW I BECAME A MORMON.

When a boy at school, I used to wonder why there were so many different churches, all claiming to be the true church. It made me think that something was wrong somewhere; wherefore I set about making inquiries as to the reasons for the differences. At first I asked my school teacher for the information I desired, but he merely sent me about my business, with the remark that I had only to do as I was told and ask no questions. What I wanted to know, he said, had been thought out by the teachers, the various ministers of the churches. I was not satisfied with this reply, but continued thinking and studying my Bible, and soon the time came when I felt it necessary to take a stand for myself, regardless of what the ministers might think. My search for truth then began in earnest; but on almost every occasion, when I asked for advice, I was told to have faith in the teachings of the church, as my parents before me had had, and it usually ended in a lecture. When my advisers had finished, I usually was in a state of bewilderment, and I hardly knew whether it was right or wrong to ask questions, so I gave it up for a time, and left the church of my parents, to the great disappointment of my people.

A year or two I went nowhere. I thought that religion was only a matter of business; but the time came when I knew better, and returned to my old way of thinking.

For a few years I went on searching for that which I could not find, and then I heard of the "Mormons," and I desired very much to meet one of the elders. This wish was gratified a few years later.

It was in the year 1912 that I had my first interview with an elder of the Church, and I shall never forget it. At that time I was fairly well versed in the Bible, and I thought that I could corner him easily, but it was not long till I found out that he could make known to me the first principles of the truth for which I had been searching so long. Then I began to investigate the doctrines of the Church; but it was six years after my first meeting with the elder that I became a member.

Before I joined the Church I went from one place to another, but my heart was always with the saints in their hall at Belfast. Still, I held back and did not come forward until, one Sunday evening, when I was walking along Royal Avenue, Belfast, I heard a voice calling me. It was the voice of an elder I knew well. He was preaching the gospel to a crowd around him, but it seemed to me that he was calling me, as from a distance. I could not turn away. I drew near, remained to the end of the meeting, and then went to the hall in the evening. And now I am glad to say that I have the peace and happiness for which I was searching so long in vain.

To the elders I would like to say, Go ye into the high-ways and by-ways, for if it had not been for that street meeting I might

still have been wandering about in the darkness in which I was. Thank God, I have seen the light.

Belfast. B. J. GIBBONS.

A LETTER FROM A BROTHER IN BELGIUM.

BROTHER WILFORD CRAVEN, writing from Somewhere in Belgium, says he is very much interested in the *Stars* which his friends send him every week, and that he desires to add his testimony to the many that have appeared on these pages from the boys at the front. It is some time now since the letter was received.

"I know," Brother Craven says, "that if we are firm and true to the faith, we will be kept safe from harm and danger. There is an old saying, 'First choose ye the path ye would follow, and then follow it, though all the world say to you, Nay.' I find that if I have companions that are not congenial, these words always come to my mind. I remember that our Lord Jesus Christ never fell, though He was tempted many times. I hope and pray that I may be kept safe and sound, so that I can return to my own little branch at Clayton, in the Leeds conference, and help to roll on the great and glorious work.

"When people called me 'Mormon,' in my younger days, I was ashamed of the name, but now I know that 'Mormonism' is a creed to be proud of. I now hold the office of a priest in the Aaronic priesthood, and I am first assistant in the Sunday school superintendency. This position is kept for me till my return, and I pray that it may not be long till all the boys, now in the field, will be back in England."

THE SMALL END OF THINGS.

SEVERAL years ago an American preacher published a book with this title, which puts in a phrase what most people seem to forget, viz., that every problem has two ends, and all depends on which end you take hold of. If you take hold of the big end, which is beyond your grasp or understanding, you must expect to be tired and perplexed; if you take hold of the small end, you will find something you can grip and live by, and that, after all, is what matters most. Not that you ought to neglect the big end altogether. We are so made that, unless we stifle the best part of our being, we cannot help wondering and guessing at the mysteries of life.

It does not matter what creed or view of life a man takes up, or what label he gives himself, he is not going to reduce life to plain A B C; wherever he goes, mystery will confront him, and, as far as he can, he should try to get to the bottom of it.

You have only to think a little to realize something of what the world owes, in religion and science and many other things, to men who have not been daunted by mystery, but have done their best to take hold of life's problems by the big end.

But the trouble is that so many people never fasten on anything but the mysterious side of religion, and this makes them feel that it is so difficult to understand that they give it up altogether and do their best to get on without it. The more sensible way is to go to the other, the small end, and see what there is to take hold of and live by.

There is no better illustration of the difference between the two ends of a problem than in the case of Christ Himself. If you start at the big end you are faced with questions and mysteries which only expert scholars and trained thinkers can tackle, and which baffle even them. You might live through a lifetime and not find an answer that satisfies you. Therefore, interesting and important as those questions are, I advise you to leave them for a time and see what you can find at the other end. Begin with the plainest and most practical things about Christ you can think of. Here is someone who talks to you about God and yourself in a way that you have never heard before, with simplicity and homeliness that make things much more real and understandable. He gives you the grandest view of life you have ever heard, and somehow makes you feel you have it in you to become a better man than you believed possible. And, perhaps best of all, when you are floundering in temptation, and finding how difficult it is to get anywhere near so high an ideal, He shows you that He understands; for, though without sin, He was "tempted in all points like as we are." And when you come to face the big sorrows and troubles of life—as we all must sooner or later—He can help you as no one else can. When a man loses a son in the war, or his health fails, or things go hopelessly wrong, and the bottom seems knocked out of life, the words of Christ mean what no other words can. His earliest disciples found out this soon enough. You remember how, when so many of His followers were leaving Him because of difficulties, He asked the little company of His closer friends if they also were going away, and one of them answered, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast words of eternal life." That man was taking Christ by the practical end. There were all kinds of things he could not understand, but Christ gave him what he could find nowhere else, and what mattered in comparison with that?—A. P., in the *Christian Work*.

Blessed are they who have the gift of making friends, for it is one of God's best gifts. It involves many things, but, above all, the power of going out of one's self and seeing and appreciating whatever is noble and loving in another.—T. Hughes.

A GOOD WORD FROM EGYPT.

I WISH to add my testimony to the many that have appeared in the *Star*, and tell the readers of our little publication something of the goodness of God. His hand is indeed over His children for their protection and guidance, wherever they are.

A little over two years ago I left England at the call of my country. Early in the year 1917 I met my youngest brother in a hospital. He was suffering from malaria, contracted while he was in Mesopotamia. I asked him concerning God's goodness to him, and he replied that he had been guided by his heavenly Father's hand, and this gave me great joy. I have been thinking that if we would be as loyal to God as we are to earthly kings, all warfare would cease, and His blessings would be poured out upon us. I bless the day when I became a member of the Church. I know that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, called to do the great and marvelous work which he performed. I hope and trust that, in the providence of God, peace may soon be restored to this earth. Then we shall see our loved ones again, be able to attend our meetings, and enjoy the influence of the Spirit of the Lord.

Somewhere in Egypt. P. E. NIGHTINGALE.

[President George Hunter, of the Coventry branch of the Church, who has forwarded this communication, says that the writer is a member of that branch of the Birmingham conference, and adds, "I send him the *Stars* regularly, and he finds great strength and encouragement in reading them."]

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Releases.—Elders Albert S. Allen and Alma Moss, of the Scottish and Irish conference respectively, were released January 16th, 1918, to return to their homes in Zion.

Departures.—Elders Albert S. Allen and Alma Moss left Liverpool January 16th, 1918, on their homeward journey.

Wedding Bells.—A very pretty wedding took place in the South London branch, London conference, on Wednesday, the 26th of December, 1917, the contracting parties being Brother William John Williams, of Vancouver, B. C. (at present serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force), and Florence Angelina Long, elder daughter of Brother and Sister George T. Long, of this branch. A reception was afterwards held at the home of the bride's parents.

Branch Conference.—President James Diggle of the Hyde branch, Manchester conference, reports two successful sessions of a branch

conference, held Sunday, January 13th, 1918. The visitors were Mission President George F. Richards, Conference President Lester F. Hewlett, and Elders John H. Wilding and Robert W. Cluff. Brother Titus Townsend conducted the Sunday-school session. Cissie Townsend led a concert recitation and Sarah Allsop gave the Articles of Faith. Elder John H. Wilding presented the names of the general and local authorities, and then spoke for a short time. Elder Robert W. Cluff spoke on the value of Sunday-school work. President George F. Richards occupied the remaining time.

First Counselor Norman Thompson conducted the evening session. He bore his testimony and then called upon President Hewlett to speak. Elizabeth Gleaves rendered a delightful solo. President Richards occupied the remaining time, giving timely advice and admonition.

Sunday School Socials.—A successful social gathering was held in Gateshead on January 3rd, this year. The Sunday school children rendered most of the program, consisting of songs, recitations, and sketches. Sister Lonie Batt had the program in charge. There was an attendance of about one hundred persons. Refreshments were served, and prizes were awarded to the children.

The South London branch Sunday school, London conference, held their annual New Year's social on Saturday, the 5th instant, at the home of Brother and Sister Bartley, 17 Stockwell Green, London, S.W. A splendid "tea" was provided by the officers and teachers, and afterwards a program was well rendered by the children, each junior taking an active part. An enjoyable evening terminated by each child's being presented with a surprise packet.

On Wednesday evening, January 2nd, this year, the Sunday school of the Dublin branch gave a successful social, under the direction of Brother Fred Baker, superintendent of the Sunday school. A fine program was rendered, prizes were awarded to twenty-nine Sunday school children, refreshments were served, and games were played.

CONTENTS:

Who Was Joseph Smith? ...	49	A Letter From a Brother in Belgium	61
At Conference in Zion	53		
Editorial: How Old Are You?...	56	The Small End of Things ...	61
What is Your Measure?... ...	58	A Good Word from Egypt ...	63
How I Became a Mormon ...	60	From the Mission Field	63

EDITED, PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GEORGE F. RICHARDS, 295 EDGE LANE, LIVERPOOL:

FOR SALE IN ALL THE CONFERENCES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN GREAT BRITAIN.